



03-057

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AUSTIN TEXAS
INTER-OFFICE**

TO: WIC Regional Directors
WIC Local Agency Directors

FROM: Barbara Keir, Director **(Original Signed)**
Division of Public Health Nutrition and Education
Bureau of Nutrition Services

DATE: June 6, 2003

SUBJECT: Materials for World Breastfeeding Month

The WIC warehouse is currently shipping the Texas WIC 2003 World Breastfeeding Poster. This year's Texas theme is *Breastfeed for Leaner, Brighter, Healthier Little Texans*. Attached to this memo you will find ideas for celebrating World Breastfeeding Month, a sample press release, and a copy of the Breastfeeding Awareness Month proclamation that was sent to Governor Perry's office. We will put a scanned copy of the signed proclamation on the WIC website once it has been signed. The magnets and activity booklets will be shipped in late June or early July.

If you have questions or require additional information please contact Amanda Hovis, Nutrition Education Consultant, Bureau of Nutrition Services, at 512/458-7111 extension 3411 or amanda.hovis@tdh.state.tx.us or Tracy Erickson, Breastfeeding Coordinator, Bureau of Nutrition Services, at 512/458-7111, extension 3409 or tracy.erickson@tdh.state.tx.us.

Attachments

Ways to Celebrate World Breastfeeding Month

Thanks to all of the Texas breastfeeding advocates in the WIC clinics our breastfeeding initiation rates are continuing to increase. However we still lose a large number of our breastfeeding moms to formula in the first few weeks. To increase the duration of breastfeeding we need to increase community support for breastfeeding moms. You can encourage this support by informing the community about the importance of breastfeeding. World Breastfeeding Month provides the perfect opportunity to do this type of outreach. Here are some ways you can promote world breastfeeding month in your community:

1. Have a **World Breastfeeding Month celebration** at a local park. Invite moms and dads-to-be and parents along with their breastfed children to the celebration. Have a barbeque or a picnic in the park with games for the parents and children to play. Ask your local shops to donate food and prizes. Ask your local media to come out and cover the event.
2. Contact your **local businesses** (including stores and offices). Provide them with copies of this year's World Breastfeeding Month poster and information on how and why they should become a Mother-Friendly Worksite.
3. Contact your local **museum, library or shops** and ask them to **create displays** that feature breastfeeding during the month of August. Provide them with copies of this year's World Breastfeeding Month poster to display.
4. See if your **local museum, library or shops** are interested in having a **coloring contest**. Provide them with copies of the children's activity booklet to use in the coloring contest or have a coloring contest at your local agency and ask your local stores to donate prizes.
5. Ask your local stores to have a most beautiful breastfed "little Texan" **contest** or have the contest at your clinic and ask the stores to donate prizes.
6. If your local **grocery stores** have bulletin boards near the checkout ask if you can do a bulletin board display on the benefits of breastfeeding during August or give the stores a copy of this year's poster to display.
7. Set up a **booth** on the benefits of breastfeeding at your local **mall**.
8. Get together with other health programs in your community have a "little Texans" **health fair** at a church, temple, mosque, area business or mall. Have a booth that focuses on benefits of breastfeeding and child health. If you will be having it at a mall, see if you can plan it for tax-free weekend.
9. Ask **local libraries** to feature current books and articles on breastfeeding, as well as children's books that portray breastfeeding as the natural way to feed babies.
10. Have a World Breastfeeding Month **story hour** at your **local library** or your WIC clinic.

Feature a book that portrays breastfeeding as the natural way to feed babies such as *Breastmilk Makes My Tummy Yummy* by Cecilia Moen.

11. Contact your **local doctors offices, hospitals, Lamaze classes and birthing centers**. Ask them to display the poster during August and provide them with some of the WIC breastfeeding materials.
12. Visit a **school, religious group, civic organization or club** such as the Chamber of Commerce or the Shriners or Kiwanis club the month of August. Inform them about the benefits breastfeeding provides.
13. Contact your local **quilting guild**; see if they would donate baby quilts to new moms that are planning to breastfeed. You can create “baby bundles” that you can give to the new moms at the hospital or the WIC clinic. Talk with the quilting guild about the importance of breastfeeding.
14. Contact your local **Girl Scout** troops and inform them about the importance of breastfeeding. See if there is a project that you can involve the Girls Scouts in that will help raise awareness about the importance of breastfeeding.
15. Invite breastfeeding mothers in your community to contact their **radio stations** during the month of August to request that they air a segment on the benefits of breastfeeding.
16. Set up a class of your **momms and dads-to-be** and ask one of your peer counselors husband’s to come in as a **guest speaker**. Ask him to talk about how and why he supports his wife’s decision to breastfeed.
17. Do a class that includes **grandparents** and dads of the mom-to-be. Ask the grandparent of one of your peer counselors to come in as a **guest speaker** talk about why they support breastfeeding.
18. Have a “little Texans” **mini-carnival or health fair** at your WIC clinic. Have a booth on the benefits of breastfeeding to the child.
19. Ask your city’s **mayor** to proclaim August as World Breastfeeding Month in your community. You can use the sample governor’s proclamation as an outline for your mayor’s proclamation. Ask your **local newspapers** to cover the signing of the proclamation.
20. Last, but definitely not least, personalize and send the **sample press release** to local newspapers, newsletters, magazines and other community publications to make people aware of World Breastfeeding Month and your activities honoring breastfeeding women and their children.

Sample Press Release

August is World Breastfeeding Month

(Name of local agency or clinic site) will celebrate World Breastfeeding Month on August (date) with (event or activities) at (address). The (event or activities) will be from (time) to (time).

This event marks the beginning of World Breastfeeding Month 2003, a time each August when health officials spotlight the benefits of breastfeeding. Sponsors include the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) in conjunction with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, La Leche League International and the Texas Department of Health.

This year's theme, *Breastfeed for Leaner, Brighter, Healthier Little Texans*, focuses on the health benefits that breastfeeding provides to children. It will be used in Texas Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition clinics to educate clients on the positive impact breastfeeding has on child health.

Breastfeeding supplies the best nutrition for babies and helps them form strong immune systems to fight illness. Breastfed infants have fewer ear infections, incidences of diarrhea, lung infections and infections of the brain and spine. Recent studies confirm that children who were breastfed have higher IQs and a decreased risk of becoming overweight or obese later in life. In addition, mothers who breastfeed their babies also receive health benefits including reduced risks of breast and ovarian cancer and osteoporosis.

Encouraging mothers to breastfeed their infants is an important step in health promotion in Texas. The benefits for the state include not only healthier Texans but also a significant reduction in health-care costs now and in the future.

For more information about World Breastfeeding Month, visit the following Web sites: <http://www.waba.org.br/wbw2002.htm>, http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/wichd/bf/WBM2001_sitemap.htm and <http://www.lalecheleague.org/walk.html>. For the breastfeeding policy statements from the American Academy of Pediatrics, see <http://www.aap.org/policy/re9729.html> and the American Academy of Family Physicians position paper on breastfeeding at <http://www.aafp.org/x6633.xml>.

(For more information, contact [breastfeeding coordinator or director] at [phone number].)

Sample Governor's Proclamation

State of Texas
Office of the Governor

Breastfeeding, an important time of bonding between mother and child, can provide babies with a healthy start to life and a strong foundation for their future well-being. Research shows that breastmilk is the best nutrition for babies and helps them form strong immune systems to fight illness. Breastfed infants have fewer ear infections, incidences of diarrhea, lung infections and infections of the spine and brain. Children who are breastfed as infants also tend to have an increased intelligence quotient and a decreased risk of obesity.

The Texas Department of Health joins a worldwide campaign during the month of August to increase public awareness of the many benefits of breastfeeding. The Texas theme this year, "Breastfeed for Leaner, Brighter, Healthier Little Texans," emphasizes the importance of breastfeeding as means of promoting child health. As part of the campaign, Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) clinics and others across the state will distribute information to families on the importance of breastfeeding.

Seven years ago, the Texas Breastfeeding Initiative set goals for 2004 of increasing the percentage of mothers who initiate breastfeeding in the hospital to at least 75 percent and increasing the percentage of mothers who breastfeed until their babies are 6 months old to at least 50 percent. Currently, an estimated 69.4 percent of Texas mothers breastfeed in the hospital, but only 29.5 percent are still breastfeeding six months later.

Children are our most precious resource. I encourage all Texans to learn about the many benefits breastfeeding offers to both mother and child and to become familiar with the services available to educate and support new mothers in the Lone Star State. Let us all make a concrete effort to put our children on the path to a healthy future and improve the health of Texas children.

Therefore, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim August 2003

Breastfeeding Awareness Month

In Texas and urge the appropriate recognition thereof.